Planning the Political Intervention: Electoral Campaigns

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Section 1: Overview

In this chapter, we build from the five-stage process for developing political strategy introduced in Chap. 5, and adapt it to take you through the process of planning an electoral campaign. Electoral campaigns are those that focus on convincing voters to cast their ballot for or against a particular candidate or issue. They "represent the core of representative democracy" (Rackaway 2011). In fact, "the quality of a democratic society can be easily linked to the quality of its election campaigns" (para 1).

The five-stage process outlined in this chapter is most relevant to domains 1, 4, and 5, specifically to strategies involving increasing voter registration, working on campaigns or running for office, seeking passage or defeat of ballot initiatives or referenda, and educating voters and underrepresented groups about policy issues that are part of electoral campaigns. As a quick review, these five stages are as follows:

1. Determining the specific purpose of the electoral campaign.
2. Assessing the internal (organizational) and external (environmental) context for the electoral campaign.
3. Identifying the campaign's long-term, intermediate, and short-term goals.
4. Selecting specific targets for the electoral campaign.
5. Identifying and selecting the tactics the campaign will use.

Developing Social Work Competency
The Council on Social Work Education establishes educational standards for all social work programs in the USA. Content in this chapter supports building competency in the following areas that are considered core to the practice of social work:
COMPETENCY 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
COMPETENCY 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
COMPETENCY 5: Engage in Policy Practice
COMPETENCY 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
COMPETENCY 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Domains of Political Social Work	
1. Engaging individuals and communities in political processes	◀
2. Influencing policy agendas and decision-making	
3. Holding professional and political positions	
4. Engaging with electoral campaigns	◀
5. Seeking and holding elected office	◀

Section 2: Determining the Specific Purpose of the Electoral Campaign (Stage 1)

A campaign plan is one of the earliest products of your campaign effort. It includes the blueprint of all of the activities you will do throughout the course of the campaign, starting at day 1 (including the primary election if there is one) and ending on the days after Election Day (Shaw 2014). A campaign plan is an internal document but might be shared with others, such as potential donors or staff members, to demonstrate the viability of your campaign. We have provided a link to a sample campaign plan from Wellstone Action in the Resources section at the end of this chapter to illustrate what a full plan for an electoral campaign might look like.

A good campaign plan includes each of the following elements:

- An overview of the campaign's strategy
- Voter targeting
- Field and voter contact plans
- Outreach plans
- The campaign timeline
- The campaign's overall message
- Campaign staff and volunteer roles and responsibilities
- Plans for raising and spending money

In this chapter, we focus on the first five elements. Subsequent chapters of this book examine messaging, staffing, and financial issues in more depth.

As we begin the process of developing a campaign plan, we start by identifying the specific purpose of the electoral campaign. Of course, the primary purpose of any electoral campaign is to win! It is important, however, to be even clearer and

more specific in defining your campaign's purpose. In this section, we explore critical concepts to keep in mind as we do this. In advancing a cause through the electoral process, we will choose from two types of electoral campaigns: (1) a candidate campaign, where we are seeking votes for a specific individual to hold elected office, or (2) an issue campaign, where we are seeking votes for or against a specific issue. Within these types of campaigns, your purpose may differ based on the details described below.

Candidate Elections

First, in a **candidate election**, designed to elect a person or slate of people to office, determine the kind of election in which you are participating, and what this means for what the campaign is seeking to accomplish. Is it seeking to defeat one candidate or multiple candidates; to win a majority or plurality of votes; to situate the candidate for a run in a subsequent election; or perhaps to push back on an attempt to get your candidate out of office?

A key factor to consider in identifying the purpose of your campaign is whether the election in which your candidate will be running is partisan or nonpartisan. A **partisan race** is one in which each candidate is nominated by a political party. This could happen as part of a primary election or caucus or as part of a **nominating** process by the official members of that party. Either selection process gives the candidate the right to use the label of that political party during the corresponding general election and to access that party's resources, including money, volunteers, and reputation. A **nonpartisan race** is one in which candidates run without any party affiliation in a general election. In the USA, nonpartisan elections are most common for judicial elections, but are also seen in municipal elections, including Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, and Phoenix (National League of Cities 2016), and in village and school board elections in New York state.

Candidate elections can generally be divided into one of four categories that impact the dynamics of your specific electoral campaign: primary elections, general elections, special elections, and recall elections (Ishiyama and Breuning 2010).

Partisan Elections: Primaries, Caucuses, and Conventions

In the USA, the process by which political parties choose the candidates who will represent them in the general election are, in the words of the National Conference of State Legislators (2016b), "complex and nuanced, to say the least" and "a cause of confusion among voters and election administrators alike" (para 1). **Primary elections** are almost always partisan, and are one way to winnow down a large field of candidates into a smaller list. They allow members of a political party to decide who will represent them in a future general or regular election. When planning for a primary campaign, your campaign's purpose is to get your candidate to the general election.

Primary elections may be held for federal, state, and municipal elections. Primaries for federal and state offices are typically conducted by state governments.

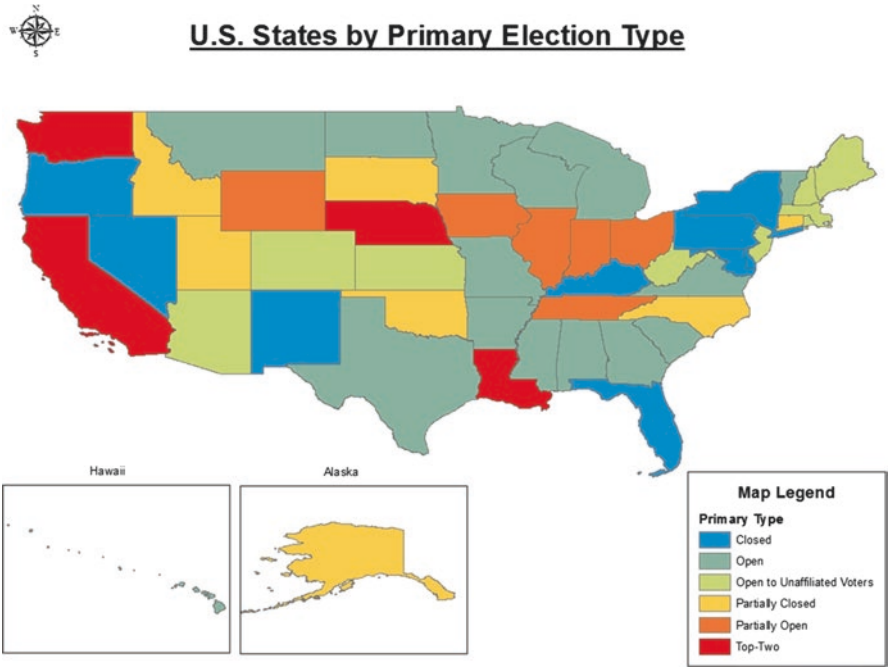


Fig. 7.1 U.S. States by Presidential primary election type. Created by Dr. Thomas Felke, Florida Gulf Coast University Department of Social Work, from data provided by the National Conference of State Legislators (2016b)

Members of political parties, whether Democratic, Republican, Green, Libertarian, or another party, work within existing state laws to choose candidates. Primaries, as practiced in the USA, generally reinforce our **two-party system**, where the two major political parties hold the majority of the power and positions in the political realm. **Third parties** or smaller parties hold few seats. Fewer still are held by those who are **unaffiliated**, officially connected with no political party (Ishiyama and Breuning 2010; Snyder and Ting 2002).

Primaries or **primary elections** can be divided into six categories from most restrictive to least restrictive (NCSL 2016b). Figure 7.1 illustrates this diversity in types of Presidential primaries in the USA, as of 2018:

1. Nine states with **closed primaries** require voters to be registered with a specific party in order to participate in the primary. Voters cannot participate in a primary for a party for which they are not registered, leaving independent or unaffiliated voters with no opportunity to vote in the state's primaries.
2. Seven states with **partially closed primaries** give political parties the opportunity to choose whether unaffiliated voters can participate in that party's primary, but do not allow those registered with a different party to participate. This allows more flexibility from year to year, but may lead to confusion about who can vote. (One author has lived in two of these states and had no idea that either had this system, and despite active political involvement, had no idea.)

3. Six states with **partially open primaries** let voters cross party lines but they have to publically declare their ballot choice. Voting in a party's primary may be considered registering for that party.
4. In nine states with **primaries open to unaffiliated voters** you must choose the ballot of the party you are registered with, but if you are unaffiliated, you can choose any party's ballot. Some states may require you to affiliate with a party if you choose this option.
5. Fifteen states with **open primaries** do not require voters to declare a party on their voter registration form. This system provides maximum flexibility and privacy, but may make it harder for parties to nominate candidates who represent that party's interests.
6. The final category, "**top-two" primaries**, includes four states that list all candidates on one ballot. Some, but not all of these list party affiliation or party preference next to each candidate's name. The top two candidates go on to the general election, so you may end up with two candidates from the same party in that election.

States are not required to apply the same rules both to presidential and state-level primary elections. While some do, California uses the top-two primary system for state level races, but holds separate party primaries for president (NCSL 2016b). In many states, state-level and presidential primaries are held on the same day (the least costly way of doing it), while in others, they are held on different days. Instead of primaries, 12 states (most famously Iowa) use **caucuses** to select presidential candidates. Caucuses can be thought of as more like a neighborhood meeting rather than a standard voting booth-type election (Montanaro 2016). There is no one standard way to hold a caucus. As a result, in Iowa, Democrats and Republicans use different processes, with Democrats gathering in public groups to support their candidate and Republicans voting informally via secret ballot. The Iowa Democratic caucus process is fairly complicated. To help you understand it, we provide a link to a fun video, in the Resources section, of the Lego people explaining the Iowa caucus.

For presidential elections, delegates are awarded according to party rules, based on the results of voting at the state level or other party guidelines, and those delegates determine which candidates are officially nominated at national nominating **conventions**. Many state parties also hold statewide conventions to select state party leaders and adopt party platforms. A few states use these conventions as part of their process for determining which candidates will represent the party in statewide elections (Sabato et al. 2013).

General Elections

General elections or **regular elections** are the binding elections that decide who will hold a given elected position (Lipset 2000; Schmitter and Karl 1991). In a general election campaign, the purpose of your campaign is to help your candidate to win, and therefore gain the desired elected office.

In general elections in most of the USA, the winner is the person who gets the most votes. This is usually the case, even if there are multiple candidates and the winner only receives a **plurality** (the most votes) but not a **majority** (more than

50%) of the votes. In a few places, the winner must receive at least 50% of the vote to win, and if no candidate gets at least 50% of the vote, a runoff election will be held. Runoff election systems in some states, like many voting systems, have a deep history linked with efforts to keep power away from African-Americans. For further discussion of this history, see Wilson (2014).

When general elections are held depends on the level of government involved in the election. By federal statute (3 USC Ch. 1, § 1), the Presidential Election Day is defined as follows (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration n.d.):

> §1. The electors of President and Vice President shall be appointed, in each State, on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in every fourth year succeeding every election of a President and Vice President.

This date was set in 1845 (The Twenty-Eighth Congress of the United States n.d.), as shown in Fig. 7.2.

Elections for members of the U.S. House of Representatives, who serve 2-year terms, always fall on the presidential Election Day (e.g., 2020, 2024) and on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November every even year in between the

ACTS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS

OF THE

UNITED STATES,

Passed at the second session, which was begun and held at the City of Washington, in the district of Columbia, on Monday, the 2d day of December, 1844, and ended the 3d day of March, 1845.

JOHN TYLER, President of the United States. WILLIE P. MANGUM, President of the Senate, pro tempore. JOHN W. JONES, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

STATUTE II.

CHAP. I.—*An Act to establish a uniform time for holding elections for electors of President and Vice President in all the States of the Union.*(a) Jan. 23, 1845.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the electors of President and Vice President shall be appointed in each State on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in the month of November of the year in which they are to be appointed: *Provided*, That each State may by law provide for the filling of any vacancy or vacancies which may occur in its college of electors when such college meets to give its electoral vote: *And provided, also*, when any State shall have held an election for the purpose of choosing electors, and shall fail to make a choice on the day aforesaid, then the electors may be appointed on a subsequent day in such manner as the State shall by law provide.

Election day fixed.

Vacancies.

In case of no election.

APPROVED, January 23, 1845.

Fig. 7.2 Establishment of Election Day

Presidential Election years (e.g., 2018, 2022, 2026). These latter, in-between year elections are referred to as **midterm elections**. Elections for U.S. Senators, who serve staggered 6-year terms may take place either on the presidential Election Day or on the November midterm election day. Generally, many fewer people vote in midterm elections than in Presidential elections.

State law governs when state and local offices are on the ballot, thus these election days vary widely across the country. While many states hold elections for state and local seats on the November Election Day, in order to increase turnout and save the expense of running a separate election, this is up to the discretion of the state. This results in individual states holding elections on their own calendars. For example, in Connecticut, all municipal elections are held in the odd-numbered years (also called "off" years, when there are no Congressional elections). In some towns in Connecticut, those elections are held on the second Tuesday in November. In others, the elections are held on the first Monday in May. Other states that hold at least some regular or general municipal elections outside of November include Massachusetts and Wisconsin. Virginia and New Jersey hold gubernatorial elections in November of the odd year immediately following a presidential election (e.g., 2017, 2021, 2025), which means that these two states' elections often garner national attention as signals of how voters are feeling about the president's administration after almost a year in office (Malone 2013).

Special Elections

Special elections are held when there is a vacancy in an elected position outside of the usual election timeframe. Vacancies commonly emerge when an executive appoints an elected official to a high-ranking government position, when elected officials resign, or upon an official's serious illness or death. The process for filling vacancies differs from state to state, but if the state's statute calls for it, a special election can be held quickly to fill the seat. In 2017, resignations resulted in two vacancies in the Connecticut State Senate on the day the State Senate convened, triggering special elections by Connecticut statute. The winner of one of those elections was a sitting member of the Connecticut General Assembly (the lower house of Connecticut state government). In a domino effect, his win required that another special election be held for his General Assembly seat (Pazniokas 2017). In special elections, your campaign's purpose is to get your candidate elected to the vacant position, often in a tighter time frame than your campaign would have in a typical general election. When the special election is set for an irregular voting day, this election is likely to receive lower turnout than if it would have taken place on a regular Election Day.

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Revisiting Election Day

Why do we vote on Tuesdays? Visit the TedEd website (https://ed.ted.com/) and search for the video *Why do Americans vote on Tuesdays?* After you watch this video, devise an alternative to our current Election Day. Reflect on why your alternative might be an improvement on the current system. What are the pros and cons of your alternative?

Recall Elections

A **recall** is the opposite of a typical election. It is the process by which a local or state official can be removed from office through a vote before his or her term has ended. The majority of states allow for the recall of local and/or state officials (NCSL 2016a), although the process and grounds for said recall vary wildly. In Montana, for example, grounds for a recall include "physical or mental lack of fitness, incompetence, violation of oath of office, official misconduct, or conviction of a felony offense" (NCSL 2017c). Recall elections may occur outside of the regular general election timeframe. In a recall election, your campaign's purpose depends on which side of the recall you are working. If you are part of the recall campaign, your purpose is to succeed in getting the targeted official removed from office. If you are part of the official's campaign, your purpose is to push back on the recall effort and keep the official in office.

In one example earning national attention, in 2011 and 2012, petitions circulated with enough signatures in Wisconsin to have Governor Scott Walker, the Lieutenant Governor, and a total of 13 out of 33 members of the Wisconsin State Senate stand for recall elections. Three of the state senators were recalled (NCSL 2016a), one additional state senator resigned, and by 2012, the control of the State Senate had shifted from Republican to Democrat, while the governor and lieutenant governor prevailed in their elections. In a controversial 2012 decision that took place during this recall effort, the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board voted to make signatures on recall petitions more easily available to the public via a searchable form on the web (Associated Press 2012). Unlike an individual's vote, recall petitions, including signatures, are public documents.

Issue Campaigns

In an issue campaign, you similarly need to determine the kind of election in which you are participating, and what it means for what your campaign is seeking to accomplish. For example, are you seeking to compel a legislative body to consider an issue, trying to force repeal of a bill or ordinance that has passed in your state or municipality, or seeking to change the state's constitution?

Above, we focused on electoral campaigns that allow for **representative democracy**, democracy in which citizens elect individuals who govern on their behalf. In some cases, in a practice of **direct democracy,** state laws allow citizens to vote directly on specific state or municipal issues. **Issue campaigns**, often in the form of **ballot initiatives** and **referendum campaigns**, ask voters to decide about anything from the school budget to, in most states, a state constitutional amendment. (Note that while processes for amending state constitutions vary widely, Delaware is the only state in the USA in which some form of voter ratification is *not* necessary to amend the state's constitution (Erickson and Barilla 2002).) In issue campaigns, specific ideas are on the ballot rather than people.

On the state level, direct democracy can take one of two forms. An **initiative** is a "process that enables citizens to bypass their state legislature by placing proposed statutes and, in some states, constitutional amendments on the ballot" (NCSL 2012,

para 1). Twenty-four states have provisions in their state Constitutions for an initiative process, first adopted by South Dakota in 1898. Mississippi was the most recent state to add an initiative process, in 1992. An issue campaign interested in placing an initiative on the ballot for public vote will generally need to collect enough signatures to prove its issue is valid. Initiative language and petition signatures are subject to review by state officials to ensure that they are valid and in compliance with existing laws. The validity of signatures may be challenged by the opposing campaign. Once determined valid, in some states, the initiative is then placed directly on the ballot. In others, the legislature first has the opportunity to act on the initiative or even to simultaneously propose its own competing ballot measure.

A **referendum** is similar in many ways to an initiative. It also appears on the ballot for direct voter decision-making. It can be in the form of a **legislative referendum**, where the state legislature refers a measure to the public for a vote after it has been approved by that body, or a **citizen referendum**, which comes directly from the public. Referenda can be used either to support or repeal a bill passed by a legislative body. For example, in Nevada, the legislature can refer a piece of legislation directly to the public in the form of a legislative referendum. This is most often used in the state for a particularly controversial bill (Kant 2005). If the public wants to nullify a policy passed by the state legislature, Nevada grants public authority to gather signatures to put a policy on the ballot (Kant 2005). If the public votes against the law, it becomes void.

Issue campaigns may take somewhat differing forms at the municipal level, though in many ways they mirror the state processes described above. In some municipalities, citizens can propose legislation through direct initiative. For example, in specific large cities in Texas that have special state-granted "home rule" status, voters can petition for a public vote on behalf a new ordinance (an initiative) or to repeal an existing ordinance (a referendum). These enable the public to bypass a city council that they believe is not appropriately acting on the ordinance (Texas Municipal League 2015).

In contrast, issue campaigns in approximately 1000 towns, including those in six New England states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) and some Minnesota townships (Minnesota Association of Townships 2017), focus on influencing citizens' participation in **town meetings**. In town meetings, decisions about the municipality are made directly by town residents who choose (and are able) to show up (Zimmerman 1999). In Vermont, 230+ towns hold meetings annually, generally the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March (Bryan 2003). We refer here specifically to the type of town meetings that allow citizens to vote directly on issues. Towns also may hold town meetings where there are discussions but not votes. Elected officials may also hold town meetings as opportunities for residents of their districts to voice their opinions.

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Your State's Options for Direct Democracy

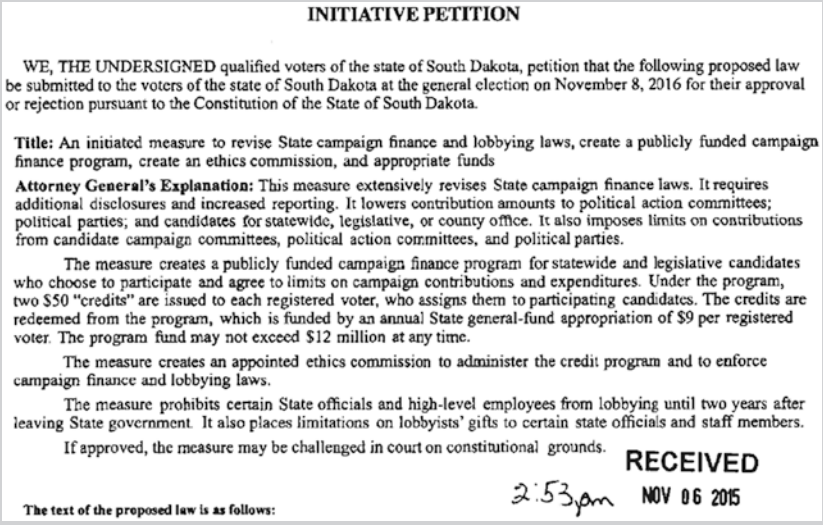
Visit the National Conference of State Legislatures resource page on elections and campaigns (http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns). Follow the link to "Initiative and Referendum," and find your state's rules on initiatives and referenda. Does your state allow initiatives or referenda? If so, find out the latest initiative or referendum that came to a public vote in your state. What was it, and did it succeed or fail?

CASE STUDY: An Initiative Process

In 2015, the Center for Public Integrity awarded South Dakota a grade of "F" in state integrity. Concerns about integrity and transparency in South Dakota's state government have crystallized in recent years after several high-profile news stories about corruption. One such story included an apparent suicide by a high-level political appointee. After his suicide, the public learned that he had been accused of felony theft from state and federal funds. A long investigation followed, ensnaring other South Dakota politicians, including the former Governor—now U.S. Senator Mike Rounds. Ultimately, a legislative committee conducted hearings and determined that only the initial employee was responsible for any problematic or unethical activity (Tupper 2015).

Following this, South Dakotan voters brought forth a public initiative on the 2016 ballot. Initiated Measure 22, "an Act to revise certain provisions concerning campaign finance and lobbying, to create a democracy credit program, to establish an ethics commission, and to make an appropriation therefor," also referred to as the "South Dakota Government Accountability and Anti-Corruption Act" (South Dakota Secretary of State 2017), was one of ten ballot measures up for direct public vote that year (Fig. 7.3).

The initiative passed on November 8, 2016, with 51.62% of the popular vote in favor of the measure and 48.38% opposed (South Dakota Secretary of State 2017). However, success for the initiative's supporters was short-lived. A few months later, the state legislature in South Dakota used "emergency rules" to



INITIATIVE PETITION

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED qualified voters of the state of South Dakota, petition that the following proposed law be submitted to the voters of the state of South Dakota at the general election on November 8, 2016 for their approval or rejection pursuant to the Constitution of the State of South Dakota.

Title: An initiated measure to revise State campaign finance and lobbying laws, create a publicly funded campaign finance program, create an ethics commission, and appropriate funds

Attorney General's Explanation: This measure extensively revises State campaign finance laws. It requires additional disclosures and increased reporting. It lowers contribution amounts to political action committees; political parties; and candidates for statewide, legislative, or county office. It also imposes limits on contributions from candidate campaign committees, political action committees, and political parties.

The measure creates a publicly funded campaign finance program for statewide and legislative candidates who choose to participate and agree to limits on campaign contributions and expenditures. Under the program, two $50 "credits" are issued to each registered voter, who assigns them to participating candidates. The credits are redeemed from the program, which is funded by an annual State general-fund appropriation of $9 per registered voter. The program fund may not exceed $12 million at any time.

The measure creates an appointed ethics commission to administer the credit program and to enforce campaign finance and lobbying laws.

The measure prohibits certain State officials and high-level employees from lobbying until two years after leaving State government. It also places limitations on lobbyists' gifts to certain state officials and staff members.

If approved, the measure may be challenged in court on constitutional grounds.

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The text of the proposed law is as follows:

Fig. 7.3 Initiative petition for ethics reform in South Dakota, 2015

(continued)

overturn the public's decision. This was achieved through a 54-13 vote in the South Dakota House, a 270-8 vote in the South Dakota Senate, and a signature by the Governor (Krieg 2017).

While the state legislature overturned the specific initiative voted on by the public, it passed several pieces of legislation with the stated goal of addressing the same ethical issues as the repealed initiative (Albers 2017). These were signed by Governor Daugaard on March 10, 2017.

Proponents and opponents of Initiated Measure 22 disagree about whether the new legislation will achieve the same goals as the repealed initiative. However, it is worth noting that without the initiative, it is unlikely that the legislature would have considered any bills seeking ethics reform.

The future ramifications of this process remain to be seen. As all South Dakotan legislators serve 2-year terms, all members of the South Dakota House of Representatives and Senate will be on the ballot again in 2018, as will the state's Governor. In addition, the South Dakota legislature is considering changing the process to make initiated measures and other ballot initiatives more difficult to enact (Mercer 2017). Want to watch the Initiative Referendum Task Force debating this? We provide a link in Resources.

FURTHER REFLECTION: Initiative Case Study Reflection

Discussion question #1: This case study offers an interesting juxtaposition of direct democracy (South Dakotans' support for a popular initiative) and representative democracy (South Dakotan legislators' opposition to this initiative, while supporting other reforms). What are your thoughts about the comparative importance of direct and representative democracy?

Discussion question #2: In this case study, advocates pursued an electoral strategy in South Dakota, although the South Dakota Government Accountability and Anti-Corruption Act was not implemented. In your opinion, were they successful in moving the conversation on ethics forward?

Section 3: Assessing the Internal (Organizational) and External (Environmental) Context for the Electoral Campaign (Stage 2)

In an electoral campaign, as with other social work efforts, conducting a thorough assessment of both the internal and external context is critical. For an electoral campaign, preliminary assessments often start long before we actually take the plunge into running for office or working on a campaign. Then, once your campaign is active and starting to think about strategy, it is time to engage your leadership team in a full and honest assessment of the internal and external context for your

campaign. Careful assessment of the internal and external strengths and limitations of your campaign helps you both identify the assets upon which you can build as you design your strategy, and anticipate where the campaign may be vulnerable.

At the same time you are conducting your assessment, others will be conducting their own assessment. A number of groups recruit and train candidates for electoral office. Political parties, especially the two main US political parties, serve as informal gatekeepers as they actively recruit candidates. On the federal level, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) and the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) seek out and support specific candidates that they see as most likely to be successful at garnering both the funds and votes necessary for a successful race for Congress. This party recruitment can start very early in the campaign cycle. For example, 1 day before Inauguration Day in January 2017, the NRCC head of candidate recruitment announced that her top priorities for the 2018 Congressional elections included recruiting female Republican candidates (Marcos 2017). Three months later, DCCC leaders reported that they had already met with over 250 possible candidates in 64 Congressional districts in advance of the 2018 elections (Dovere 2017). Your assessment needs to be thoughtful and well-done; however, if your assessment takes too long, you might already be playing catch up!

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Potential Electoral Campaign Scenarios

Read each of the following scenarios and discuss the corresponding question(s).

Scenario 1: You hear rumors that your local member of Congress is considering retiring in the next few years. He has held the seat for 20 years, so this is an exciting opportunity for your district and for individuals who have contemplated a run for higher office. You have been active in local politics for many years, and have held a seat on your school board. Because of your involvement, you have been asked to sit on the committee formed by your local political party that will decide which candidate(s) they will endorse.

Discussion question #1: What benefit would there be to having a social worker serve on this committee?

Discussion question #2: Should you agree to serve on the committee, consider running for this position, or both? Why?

Scenario 2: You have been the campaign manager for your hometown's state representative in three separate elections. Your candidate was successful in the first campaign, and became a state representative. Two years later, you ran her campaign when she won again. Last year, she ran for reelection, but this time, she lost. The candidate has decided she needs a break from politics and will not run in next year's election. Several people in the community who are in your political party have expressed potential interest in running, but no one has formally **declared** (said they were running).

(continued)

Discussion question #1: Should you consider running for this position? Why or why not?

Discussion question #1: What benefit would there be to having a social worker run for this position?

Scenario 3: You are the executive director of a statewide nonprofit organization and have been very active in state and local politics. Your lease is up and you and your family are ready to decide where to live for at least the next few years. You have always wanted to run for office, but your political views are a minority in your current town, so you never considered a campaign possible.

Discussion question #1: Should you consider your political goals when moving?

Discussion question #2: If so, what factors should you consider when looking to move to a new town?

Assessing Your Individual and Organizational Context

Before we begin discussion of how to assess your campaign's internal context, we encourage you to complete the activity apply your skills: potential electoral campaign scenarios.

The considerations raised in these scenarios are critical to the kinds of self-focused internal assessment that is necessary before embarking on an electoral campaign, regardless of the role you will ultimately play. As a social worker who may be considering running for office or who is looking for a political campaign that you can contribute to, we encourage you to reflect on the types of issues raised by these scenarios. Do you already have a candidate in mind to support (yourself, for example)? Is there a particular race in which you are interested: for example, are you particularly bothered by the way that your district's incumbent state representative has been voting, and are committed to seeing this representative replaced? What kind of role are you seeking? Are you interested in running yourself, or in developing experience and connections for a future run?

Consider your own values as you embark on an electoral campaign. Given that no candidate is ever going to align perfectly with your values, political beliefs, and issue positions (unless you run yourself!), you need to know your "deal breakers." On which issues are you willing or unwilling to compromise? Think very carefully before considering working for a candidate who does not align with values and priorities that are important to you. If the best candidate in the race aligns with some of your values, but not others, are you comfortable working for that candidate? There is no one right answer to this question, but it is a common question that those of us who work in the political arena face. As with choosing which candidate to vote for in an election, each one of us makes this calculation based on our professional social work values, as well as our own personal values and priorities.

Whether you are considering running for office yourself or are considering whether to work for a candidate, consider whether the candidate is able to do the internal work necessary to win an election. That is, does the candidate have the

capacity and desire to create an organization that can win? The internal assessment questions raised in Chap. 5 are particularly helpful with this evaluation. These include questions assessing the time, money, and people resources the campaign will have access to, its access to expertise, its sources of power, and—of critical importance—whether the candidate is fully prepared to embark on all that a run for office entails.

Once you are on board with a campaign and ready to begin strategic planning, internal assessment must involve a comprehensive assessment of your candidate's strengths *and* weaknesses relative to the specific **district** in which you are situated. A district is a political subdivision that is grouped together to elect a specific representative(s) to a government body. Just as we look for a match between the person and environment in direct practice (Gitterman and Germain 2008), we look for a match between the candidate and the specific district and race in political practice. This focused assessment will help us to determine whether the candidate is a good match for the district. This assessment also will be very useful in subsequent stages for helping the campaign communicate to voters why the candidate should be elected to represent the district.

POLITICAL SOCIAL WORKER PROFILE: Jessica J. Mitchell, MSW
Democratic Political Consultant (Fig. 7.4).

Fig. 7.4 Jessica J. Mitchell, MSW

Usually, I work on the finance side of campaigns, so I spend a lot of time coaching a candidate to help them raise money, and doing related paperwork. While I've always had an interest in politics, attending my MSW program finally pushed me to pursue politics as a full time career. The importance of having progressive, open minded, elected officials was made all the more clear to me while studying and working with the most vulnerable among us. Without progressive elected officials, I became concerned that our government would continue to ignore the plight of those most in need of services.

It is so hard to describe life on a campaign, because no one story can give someone a better understanding what working on a campaign is like. Campaigns (like so many other social work jobs) can't be summed up in one simple story or explanation. Some days are normal campaign days, but for the most part every day is different, starting with a plan that is off track by 9:05 a.m.

(continued)

There are definitely days where unexpected things happen. For example, during the weekend before Election Day, everyone is up for 18–20 hours a day. We are out at 1 a.m. putting out the last of our yard signs. Nothing is more depressing then finishing a campaign (especially if you lose) with leftover signs. Last year I worked on a congressional campaign for a woman who was a sitting town council person. In New York, elected officials are empowered to perform marriages, and she had one scheduled on her lunch break. Out of the blue, she texted me to meet her at a nearby park. It turned out that the couple did not know they needed witnesses for their marriage certificate, so I spent my lunch break as a witness at a wedding of two people I had never met.

Every skill you are taught in social work school is essential to campaign life, no matter what job you hold on a campaign. Most of a campaign is a long stretch of building relationships—with donors, volunteers, local political types and elected officials—and a few weeks of asking them to do stuff that needs to get done. These skills also apply to working with candidates, who I've grown to think of as my clients over the years.

The most important thing to remember, in any job, is to stay true to yourself. This is no different in politics. Many people in my life—family and friends and other social workers that I meet—are surprised (and sometimes horrified) to find out that I work in politics; others don't understand how, or why, a social worker ended up working in politics. However, every time I am working with or for a candidate, I am thinking about the next time that a bill will come up to increase funding for education, food stamps, student loan forgiveness or so many other important issues. I know that the candidate I am supporting will be voting in favor. Most everything that social workers do after graduation is authorized and funded by a government agency, one of many reasons it is so important for social workers to become actively aware and actively involved in the political process. Without a voice at the table, our interests and those of our clients will not be served.

Assessing the Social, Economic, and Political Context

Assessing the external environment for your campaign is relevant at two stages: (1) as you consider whether to jump into a particular election or race, whether as a potential candidate, staff, or volunteer and (2) as you begin the strategic planning process. In considering whether to become involved in a specific race, assess whether it is possible, or likely, for you or your candidate to win it. This process is important to your considerations about whether a candidate is a good match for the particular campaign. If your candidate does not seem likely to win the race, consider whether the context suggests some other benefit to you in running in or working on this race. For example, there are large numbers of **uncontested** races in the USA, where only one candidate from one party runs in the election. While there is much disagreement on this point, some argue that parties should not leave a district

uncontested, because it communicates to voters that the party not running is disinterested in their issues, and therefore may have ripple effects for other elections on the ballot (Braden 2017). External considerations also help you to think through the various challenges present in the context that your campaign will want to address in order to be successful.

Can I (or My Candidate) Win?

It is not an exact science to determine whether a particular candidate can win a race. Otherwise we would just do the analysis and never hold actual elections. In fact, candidates do win even when conventional wisdom says they have no chance. However, an external assessment of the likelihood of your campaign winning, given the resources and context available, remains a critical step before the campaign begins. It gives your campaign important insight into your strengths and weaknesses, and will inform your campaign strategy.

This assessment can be conducted informally or formally, and it can be done well in advance of a campaign. You could conduct this assessment when choosing whether to run for office, or in choosing a place to live when you know you are interested in a future run. The data you gather at this stage will also help you estimate your win number, which is the actual number of voters you need to win, and the number of voters you need to contact to get to that number.

The first step of this assessment is perhaps the most important factor in determining whether you can win. Find out the status of the office. Does it have an **incumbent**, a person who is currently holding the office with no plans to leave? Is it an **open seat**, meaning there is no incumbent holding the seat? In the USA, incumbents have a sizeable advantage over their challengers. Incumbents in the U.S. Congress tend to win more than 85% of the time (The Center for Responsive Politics n.d.). At the state legislative level, incumbents win more than 90% of the time (Casey 2016). The common wisdom is that it is often not a good use of time to challenge an incumbent, and many incumbents are not challenged at all (Rogers 2014). In general, incumbents are more likely to be challenged in poor economic times, or as members of an unpopular leader's party. An exception is a **vulnerable** incumbent, one who is facing their first reelection, won last time by a small margin, is touched by scandal, or has other weaknesses (Biersack et al. 1993).

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Find a Race

Find a potential electoral candidate campaign in your area—local, state, or federal—that you would like to more know about. You will refer back to this race in exercises throughout this chapter. Here, briefly describe the core characteristics of the campaign. What office is the candidate seeking, for what level of government? Who currently holds this office, and which party does this incumbent represent? As far as you can tell, is the incumbent planning to run for the office again in the next election?

Dist	Clinton	Trump	Clint%	Trump%	Obama	Romney	Obama%	Romney%
134	50,043	35,983	54.7%	39.3%	34,731	46,926	41.7%	56.4%
102	30,291	24,768	52.3%	42.7%	24,958	29,198	45.3%	53.0%
114	35,259	29,221	52.1%	43.2%	28,182	35,795	43.5%	55.2%
105	25,087	20,979	52.1%	43.6%	20,710	23,228	46.5%	52.1%
115	30,897	26,158	51.5%	43.6%	23,353	29,861	43.2%	55.3%
108	39,584	34,622	50.3%	44.0%	27,031	40,564	39.3%	59.0%
113	27,532	26,468	49.1%	47.2%	23,893	27,098	46.3%	52.5%
112	26,735	26,081	48.3%	47.1%	22,308	28,221	43.5%	55.0%
138	24,706	24,670	47.6%	47.5%	18,256	27,489	39.3%	59.2%
136	37,324	35,348	46.7%	44.2%	26,423	35,296	41.2%	55.1%

Fig. 7.5 Texas House district breakdown by presidential vote, 2016 and 2012 (Reproduced from Kuffner 2017)

Dist	Burns	Keasler	Burns%	Keasl%	Hampton	Keller	Hampt%	Keller%
105	23,012	21,842	49.0%	46.5%	19,580	21,745	45.8%	50.8%
113	25,411	26,940	46.4%	49.2%	22,651	25,693	45.6%	51.7%
115	26,876	28,999	45.8%	49.4%	21,431	28,402	41.5%	55.0%
134	39,985	44,560	45.4%	50.6%	33,000	42,538	42.3%	54.5%
102	26,096	28,210	45.3%	49.1%	23,232	27,295	44.3%	52.1%
043	21,812	25,213	44.3%	51.2%	21,565	22,434	47.5%	49.4%
112	23,798	27,901	43.9%	51.4%	20,942	26,810	42.4%	54.3%
135	25,998	31,365	43.7%	52.8%	20,745	30,922	39.2%	58.4%
138	22,119	26,669	43.6%	52.6%	17,470	26,224	38.9%	58.4%
114	28,774	35,129	43.3%	52.8%	26,441	33,128	43.1%	53.9%
136	32,436	37,883	42.7%	49.9%	23,925	32,484	39.3%	53.3%
132	29,179	36,667	42.7%	53.6%	20,237	30,515	38.9%	58.6%
065	26,010	32,772	42.4%	53.4%	20,732	30,377	39.1%	57.3%
052	28,698	34,976	42.2%	51.4%	21,947	28,562	40.8%	53.1%
054	22,114	27,979	42.0%	53.1%	20,110	24,571	43.5%	53.2%
045	31,530	39,309	41.7%	52.0%	24,897	32,734	40.6%	53.3%

Fig. 7.6 Texas House district breakdown by Court of Criminal Appeals vote, 2016 and 2012 (Reproduced from Kuffner 2017)

The second step of this process is to assess the district and the precincts that make up that district. At the district level, find out the typical voter turnout, the typical **party affiliation** of voters (with which party are they registered), and how the district typically votes by party.

In Figs. 7.5 and 7.6, we provide some examples from a newspaper-affiliated blog that broke down legislative districts in Texas by their voting numbers and percentages for both presidential and local races (Kuffner 2017). We encourage you to read the full post, linked in the Resources section. Figure 7.5 highlights an analysis of

key Texas legislative districts by the candidates for which voters voted in the 2016 and 2012 presidential races. The first column is the state House district, followed by four columns showing the number and percentage of votes for each major party Presidential candidate in that district in 2016. The subsequent columns show the number and percentage of votes for each major party Presidential candidate in that district in 2012.

Figure 7.6 includes many of the same legislative districts in the same years, but instead reflects the votes for a statewide position, a seat on the state's Court of Criminal Appeals. (Judges are not elected in all states, nor are judicial elections partisan in all states, but in Texas, this is a partisan seat.) The first column once again is the state legislative district. The next four columns show the number and percentage of votes for two major party judge candidates in 2016. Burns was the Democrat, and Keasler was the Republican. The final four columns show the number and percentage of votes for the two major party candidates in 2012. Hampton was the Democrat, and Keller was the Republican candidate.

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Analyze District Data

Find a district represented in both of the charts above. (The full charts can be found at http://blog.chron.com/kuffsworld/2017/03/precinct-analysis-the-targets-for-2018/.) Look at the vote in that district in 2012 for both president and Court of Criminal Appeals. Were the percentages of voters supporting Democratic and Republican candidates similar in the two races? Repeat the exercise for 2016 for both president and court of criminal appeals. Then compare within the district—what changes happened between 2012 and 2016?

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Find Data About a Chosen Race

For the campaign you described earlier in this chapter, what data can you find about voting in that district? Using local news reports or election offices, can you determine what the voter turnout was in the district in the last three elections for that office? Which candidates ran in those races, and how many votes did they each get? Based on these data, what do you think are some key considerations for a potential candidate in the next election?

Although district-level analyses are critical, in an electoral campaign, you will need to focus most of your attention on the precinct level. A **precinct** is a subset of a district, the smallest subdivision within a state, and is a small geographic area in which voters are provided ballots for a particular office. Precincts are also sometimes referred to as electoral districts, voting districts, boxes, beats, or wards (U.S. Election Assistance Commission 2015). There are approximately 175,000 precincts in the USA. The number of voters in each precinct varies substantially depending on state law. For more information about the way that elections are administered in states across the country, we recommend the U.S. Election Assistance Commission report in the Resource section.

In a **precinct analysis**, you look at publically available records in your community to find out what the voting trends are and what candidates or methods have been successful in reaching voters in the past. During this process, data is collected on each precinct within the boundaries of the district. There are several main sources for gathering precinct analysis data, typically available for free or at a low cost (Shaw 2014):

- Local elections offices (available to everyone, may cost money)
- Local political parties (see more about this below)
- Local advocacy groups (if you have a relationship with them)
- The U.S. Census (free and publically available but can be difficult to navigate)

Precinct analysis can be conducted well in advance of a campaign. Completing the analysis prior to the campaign allows it to inform all of your strategic planning. Shaw's excellent description of precinct analysis includes the following considerations:

1. Consider the type of election. For a partisan primary election, gather information only about those who can vote in that party's primary. In a nonpartisan primary or general election, gather information for all eligible voters. Compare apples to apples: if it is a special election, compare to other special elections.
2. Reach out to your local election office. Do they have the data available on their website? Can they email you the data or provide it on a CD? Data that is already in Excel or can be converted from a PDF is ideal, but we work with what we get.
3. If a political party has endorsed the campaign, ask the party for any analyses they have already completed of your district.

Once you have access to the data, Shaw's (2014) book for campaign managers (see Resources) includes a sample template for an Excel spreadsheet that you can use for each of the comparable elections you are looking at. (This is a great task for a campaign volunteer or a friend who is good with data entry.) Once you have created the spreadsheets, use these numbers to help you and your team understand both the total numbers of voters per precinct and the overall turnout percentages. These spreadsheets may look similar to in format to the district spreadsheets in Figs. 7.5 and 7.6.

The final step of the precinct analysis is a review for trends and patterns, as the Carolina Public Press does in the link provided in the Resource section. This review helps you understand which candidates, from which parties, have the most realistic chance of winning in the chosen district. Depending on the time you have available, the size of the district, and your needs, this process can allow for very specific analysis of this data (Shaw 2014).

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Find a Precinct
Enter your street address into the interactive map at the bottom of this page: https://decisiondeskhq.com/data-dives/creating-a-national-precinct-map/. What is your precinct name, the total number of votes in your precinct at the last election, and the percentage of votes won by each candidate in your precinct? Did you find any surprises?

Role of Parties and Partisanship in Your Campaign

Your external assessment should examine how political parties are viewed in your district and the extent to which voters in your district align themselves with these parties. This assessment will help your campaign make decisions about the role of political parties in your campaign, and about how you want to situate your candidate relative to a party.

The following assessment process will help you answer two questions: (1) Do you want to affiliate with a political party? (2) If so, what role do you want that party to play in your election? While we reference political parties specifically, the same process can help you determine whether to affiliate with other outside organizations; for example, should you pursue the endorsement of the National Association of Social Workers, a local union, or the American Conservative Union?

Questions to consider:

1. What is the candidate's personal political identification? Does the candidate's ideology and value system suggest that affiliation with a political party is an ethical, appropriate choice?
2. What does partisan identification look like with in your district? Is party affiliation a key aspect of winning in your area? Consider your precinct analysis and the history of races in your area. If the majority of registered voters in your area belong to a major party, the battle for a third party or unaffiliated candidate can be substantially harder.
3. What resources does the party have to offer? Would it be in the campaign's best interest to be connected with the party because of the name recognition, money, or volunteers they could contribute?
4. What do you know about the party leaders and activists in your area (see the discussion of key leaders below)? Are they people that are likely to provide support to your campaign? What will they think about working with your candidate?

Party affiliation is not required to run for office, but as discussed earlier in this chapter, it can be a requirement for voting in a primary election. Independent or third party candidates hold offices around the country, while many municipal and judicial offices are nonpartisan. The major national third parties as of this writing are the Libertarian and Green parties, with some presence in all or nearly all states. Other significant third parties include the Constitution party, Working Families party, and Reform party. Links to all of these party websites are in the Resources section. As of 2017, two U.S. Senators identify as Independents: Bernie Sanders and Angus King. Both caucus with (or affiliate with) the Democrats in the Senate. As a result, both vote for the Democratic leader to be the leader of the Senate, and receive committee assignments from the Democrats (O'Keefe 2014). These affiliations are not necessarily exclusive; for example, Senator King has expressed a willingness to caucus with Senate Republicans if he sees it to be in the best interests of his state of Maine.

Determining how involved the campaign wants the political party to be is an important decision. Political parties can play an important role in partisan campaigns, and it is important for each campaign to consider this. Kraus (2011) outlines several roles that political parties may play in US campaigns:

- Serving as symbols for partisan identification for voters, providing voters with motivation and a framework for participation.
- Taking on much of the responsibility of socializing and educating voters on important issues, as well as encouraging participation in the process. Some argue, however, that this plays a role in channeling social conflict away from systemic issues and into reinforcement of the existing system.
- Recruiting and nominating or sponsoring political candidates. This process generally involves significant amount of power given to party insiders and leaders, particularly at the national level.
- Mobilizing voters to support candidates who have been nominated. Parties spend a significant amount of resources communicating with voters during campaigns about all aspects of the candidates and voting process.
- After the election has concluded, facilitating cooperation between members of the party who have been elected, including between those in different branches and different levels of government.

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Role of Parties in Your Area
Look into the political parties in your area and/or in the district you chose in the "find a race" activity above. How do the two major parties compare in terms of voter registration? Are there any viable third parties in your area? In recent years, have any candidates who were not affiliated with one of the two major parties or were not endorsed by one of the two major parties been successful?

External Strengths and Weaknesses Assessment

A meaningful electoral campaign assessment absolutely must include a full analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of your candidate, described above as part of your internal assessment. In addition, a careful assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your opponent(s) or expected opponent and of the political climate external to the campaign is essential. Review news articles, word-of-mouth reputation, voting histories, even **opposition research**, information that may be used to weaken your opponent. This process allows you to conduct a complete assessment of the strengths and weaknesses relative to your specific district of the candidate(s) you are running against. This will help you determine how strong the opposition is likely to be, as well as your opponent's potential points of vulnerability. Your assessment also should incorporate analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the political environment. The SWOT analysis framework discussed previously can be a helpful

tool to assist you with this process. In a page or two outline these factors; and, based on these, identify what you see as your campaign's keys to winning.

Section 4: Identifying the Campaign's Long-Term, Intermediate, and Short-Term Goals (Stage 3)

The goals of an electoral campaign are generally organized around three categories:

- Short term: getting the candidate or issue on the ballot
- Intermediate: achieving benchmarks in the campaign plan
- Long term: achieving enough votes for victory on Election Day

Short-Term Goal: Getting on the Ballot

Your first goal in an electoral campaign is to get your candidate or issue on the ballot. To specify what this goal entails, determine the steps necessary to accomplish this in your particular geographic context and the deadline by which this goal must be completed. In the case of ballot initiatives, recall elections, and many candidate elections, gaining voter support via petition signatures is essential. Third party candidates may face stiff burdens to get on the ballot as compared to major party candidates.

To get your candidate or issue on the ballot, you must know the specific state and local rules that apply to your campaign. The best place to start is your state or territory's election office website. You can find a link to the appropriate site by looking online for the election office by name. This office is most commonly located within a state's office of the Secretary of State (or Secretary of the Commonwealth in some states), but also may be called the Election Office or Office of Elections, Election Commission, Board of Elections, Lieutenant Governor, Election System, Division of Elections, Government Accountability Board, or Department of Elections.

These websites post state-specific rules related to getting an issue or candidate on the ballot, as well as a calendar of dates for all election-related activities that apply to your individual campaign, to political parties, and to election officials. These include deadlines for **candidate filing** (completing the necessary paperwork to declare an intent to be on the ballot) or for collecting and submitting petition signatures to place your issue on a ballot. Other relevant deadlines on the election calendar include those for voter registration, absentee ballot applications, and when primaries can be held, as well as deadlines for when election officials must mail absentee ballots or certify candidates and issues. These websites generally also include additional information relevant to your campaign, including:

- Results of the most recent election.
- Members of the elections commission/board, method of their selection, how often they meet, and agendas and minutes of their meetings.
- Resources individual voters can use to register to vote, check their voter registration, move their registration to a new address, and more.
- Special information for those without ID, those with disabilities, or other special circumstances.
- Often, assistance for finding your polling place. Some might even allow you to apply for an absentee ballot or to be an elections official online.

Hawaii's state website offers an example of how information about getting on the ballot can be organized in a helpful manner (State of Hawaii Office of Elections 2017). In a separate section for candidates, the website outlines the time period in which you can file and weekly updates of those who have filed. The website also includes a 75-page manual that walks candidates through running for office, including understanding the electoral process and getting on the ballot.

Some municipalities or counties may have their own elections agencies separate from the state agencies. These agencies may provide useful information, as well as any municipal-specific guidelines for getting on the ballot. For example, New York City has its own board of elections, although many services are split up by the borough or county in which residents live. Information is presented in five languages on its website, along with a mobile app that helps you find your polling place (Board of Elections in the City of New York 2014).

In working toward your campaign's goal of getting on the ballot, make sure that you know specific federal rules applicable to your race. A great place to start in identifying this information is https://www.usa.gov/voting. This website contains resources about federal election laws and their histories, as well as about the presidential election process. It also provides useful campaign resources that clarify information about voter registration requirements, deadlines, and processes.

In addition to official government websites, some nonprofit organizations provide very useful sites to guide your campaign through getting a candidate or issue on the ballot. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), a bipartisan organization that helps state legislators and legislatures, has a wealth of online resources on initiatives and referenda, campaign finance, election laws, technology and procedures, and election results and analysis (NCSL 2011, 2017a). Similar resources exist on the state and local levels.

However, even the best website can only tell you so much. Make contact with those in your area to learn more about the process beyond the rules on paper. Visit your local voter registrar, county clerk, election office, or city recorder (positions vary by municipality) to understand how the laws apply on the local level. These are the experts who can give you their interpretation of local and state election laws (Shaw 2014).

Accomplishing the short-term goal of getting an issue on the ballot typically includes the following steps outlined by the NCSL (2017b); however, the specifics vary from state to state:

1. Preliminary filing of a proposed petition with a designated state official.
2. Reviewing the petition for confirmity with statutory requirements and, in several states, reviewing the proposal's language by state officials.
3. Preparing a ballot title and summary.
4. Circulating the petition to obtain the required number of registered voters' signatures, usually a percentage of the votes cast for a statewide office in the preceding general election.
5. Submitting the petitions to the state elections official, who must verify the number of signatures.

If enough valid signatures are obtained, the question goes on the ballot or, in states with an indirect process, is sent to the legislature.

The process of getting on the ballot in a candidate election also varies from state to state. The six factors that are generally considered in this process (NCSL 2011) are:

1. What are the **filing fees** (the charge that must be paid to the elections officials in order to get on the ballot)?
2. What are the **filing dates** (the deadlines by which candidates must officially file for an election; after this date, candidates would likely have to run as a write-in candidate)?
3. How many signatures do you need to get on the ballot, and who is eligible to sign?
4. Who is legally allowed to collect signatures: Do they have to be registered voters, residents of the area, members of the party they are collecting for, be a Notary Publics, etc.?
5. What are the rules for getting on the ballot as a nominee of a party (if desired, as discussed above)?
6. What are the rules about **fusion**, being listed on the ballot as a nominee of two different parties? Fusion voting used to be much more common, but as of this writing is only allowed in eight states, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Mississippi, New York, Oregon, South Carolina and Vermont (The Daily Rundown 2014).

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: How Would You Get Your Name on the Ballot?
Looking at the elected position you selected earlier in this chapter, describe the process, start to finish, that you would need to go through in order to become an official candidate for that office. Does the process seem hard? Straightforward? Accessible to all?

Intermediate Goal: Achieving Benchmarks in the Campaign Plan

While the short-term and long-term goals are fairly standard across electoral campaigns, the intermediate goals are not. Intermediate goals focus on the specific areas

in which your campaign needs to move forward once it is on the ballot, and the measurable ways that the campaign will know it is successfully reaching voters. Your campaign sets these specific goals, and tracks whether they are achieved in each area of your campaign. These goals may center on such factors as:

- Whether and how the campaign's **message** will be received by voters
- How many campaign donations will be solicited and how much will be donated to the campaign
- How many likely voters will express support for your candidate
- How many new donors or volunteers commit to the campaign
- Whether and how media will cover the campaign

Goals focus on the desired results of your campaign's efforts: what voters, volunteers, donors, or media are doing. Your campaign's actions (through targeting and tactics described below) are what will help make these goals happen. Effective campaigns constantly evaluate whether they are successfully making progress on these goals using qualitative and quantitative data measures. The frequency with which the campaign tracks these goals may change as it moves forward.

Long-Term Goal: Achieving Enough Votes for Victory on Election Day

In setting this long-term goal, a campaign must lay out the number of votes that it needs to win, within the specific characteristics of the district and the race. We outline the process for determining your WIN Number in Chap. 13, or you can see the process laid out on websites such as Wellstone Action's "WIN Number Calculator," provided in the Resource section. The district and precinct assessments discussed above help you pull together all of the data needed to make this determination.

Section 5: Selecting Specific Targets for the Electoral Campaign (Stage 4)

The decision-makers capable of bringing your candidate to victory in the US electoral system are the voters. In an electoral campaign, your efforts focus on targeting and outreach to those voters who are "gettable"; that is, who are potential voters for your candidate. Focused, strategic attention to targeting voters helps you maximize the number of persuadable voters the campaign encounters, in light of the time, people, and money available to your campaign.

Within an electoral campaign, the plan for targeting voters is referred to as a **field plan**. The field plan involves setting benchmarks for the campaign. These are based on the total number of votes needed to win, as well as the amount of time the candidate, staff, and/or volunteers will need to accomplish voter contact. The plan specifically addresses outreach to these targeted voters, and identifies community

groups and community leaders who are likely to need concerted attention from the campaign. For example, if the candidate is a social worker, the campaign plan might involve coordinating with the local NASW chapter. The plan might specify intended asks for endorsements from local individuals who have credibility in the community.

Voters

In a perfect world, we would reach out to every potential voter in a district, hear their concerns, encourage them to vote, educate them on the candidates and the voting process, and help them get to the polls on Election Day. The problem with this: no campaign has unlimited time, money, and people, which are necessary to make that happen. Every campaign has to make decisions about how to prioritize the voters they can reach within their available, and often finite, resources. Once you know how much money is likely to be available to your campaign, you will be able to estimate how many voters you will realistically be able to reach.

Given that a campaign cannot reach all potential voters directly, a campaign must determine the subset of voters it will seek to reach. If your district has 20,000 eligible voters and you only have the money to call and knock on the doors of 7000, how do you choose which voters you will try to reach through your targeting efforts?

As a campaign looks at the district in which the candidate is running, it assesses each potential voter target as belonging to one of three groups (personal communication, Jessica J. Mitchell, July 9, 2017):

1. Is the person likely to vote and likely to vote for your candidate? They are in your **base** group.
2. Is the person likely to vote and you don't know if they will vote for you? They are in your **persuasion** group.
3. Is the person likely to vote for you but you don't know if they will vote? They are in your **turnout** group.

Political professionals typically use tried and true methods from the past to identify the voters who are likely to vote for the candidate and thus who to target. Each of these groups requires a different set of tactics (discussed further in Section 6).

Campaigns with limited resources might utilize publically available data to do this targeting. With more resources, you might use polls or focus groups. Professionals also utilize knowledge grounded in theories about why and how people vote, including the influences of social capital, psychology, rational decision making, mass media, and social conditions. We recommend Williams' excellent review of the knowledge in this area (see Resources).

In national campaigns or state-level campaigns with significant resources, campaigns increasingly use technology-based techniques such as micro targeting to pinpoint specific voters who will be receptive to their messages (TargetPoint n.d.). These techniques are impressive (and perhaps disconcerting), but they are

expensive. We note, however, that in the 2016 Presidential election, Donald Trump's campaign may have benefited from moving away from these common methods of voter identification. Instead, the Trump campaign took a more experimental approach with voter targeting, using social media to identify potential voters that previous campaigns may not have identified as persuadable, and to reach out to them through mass social media messaging (Fischer and Hart 2017).

Who Is Likely To Vote

It is not good use of a campaign's time to persuade someone of the merits of your candidate if they are unable or unwilling to vote. Therefore, campaigns start by identifying **likely voters,** those who are probably going to vote in the election in which your candidate is running. There are a number of different ways in which campaigns might define likely voters, e.g., as those who generally vote (for example, have voted in two of the last three elections), those who are members of groups who generally vote (e.g., older Americans, union members, or social workers), or simply those who say they are going to vote. National polls that seek to capture the views of likely voters generally use one or more of these methods. Whether as a citizen or as a member of a campaign staff, it is a good idea when you read polls to make sure you look at the methods to see how the polling company is defining likely voters (Newport 2000). In the Resources section, we have included an interesting discussion of why it is important to understand how a poll defines likely voters written by Nate Silver, a well-known polling analyst.

A good illustration comes from Grassroots Initiative's (n.d.) work with underrepresented communities in New York City politics. In their work, they outline a hypothetical district with 165,000 people, of whom approximately 80,000 are eligible to vote. Based on partisan identification, about 60,000 of those individuals would be eligible to vote in a Democratic primary. Based on past similar elections, Grassroots Initiative estimates that just 20% (approximately 12,000) of these Democrats will actually vote in the primary. While the campaign might want to see all the district's residents engaged in politics, they determine that their limited resources would be better spent targeting the 12,000 voters likely to show up on Election Day. But how do we know who those specific 12,000 likely voters are?

Get a list of voters in your district. Your prize asset will be an accurate voter list that you get from the board of elections or an official party or party software vendor. You can purchase it for a small fee from your elections authorities. For more money, you can buy it from well-respected database companies. (Stick with database companies that have a good reputation in your community and within your party, if you are affiliated). If your party endorses you, they may share their list for free. The voter list should include at a minimum the voter's name, address, gender, age, and phone numbers. The more expensive versions, through your party, may allow you to create lists of voters based on certain criteria. You can add to this with information you gather through your campaign. Buying lists from any other source could mean the list is inaccurate or that it has been taken from another campaign—it is not worth the risk.

Sometimes, lists already have been **cleaned**, meaning someone has gone through the list and removed duplicates, mistakes, and names of voters who are deceased or have moved. These practices vary significantly based on the jurisdiction. A cleaned list can save your campaign a lot of time and increase the likelihood that you are reaching the voters you intend to reach. Both authors have participated in campaign phone banking in which we found ourselves spending a lot of time calling pages and pages of individuals whose information was no longer correct. Recent technology (similar to that used by telemarketers) allows campaigns to use automatic call software that saves some of that work. Essentially, the phone numbers on a list are autodialed, and when a number goes through, the volunteer gets the chance to speak to the voter.

Examine voting history. **Voting history**, which prior elections voters have voted in, is a key aspect of a voter list, and critical to identifying likely voters. While the specific candidate for whom you vote is secret, the fact that you voted is considered public information. If you are preparing for a primary campaign, you will look to individuals' primary voting history to identify likely voters. If you are preparing for a general election campaign in a non-presidential year, you will look to individuals' voting history in similar elections. Knowing in which elections individuals have voted in the past is critical for determining likely voters. Many people vote only in presidential years, and some never vote in primaries or special elections. You also may find it helpful to look at when individuals on your list registered to vote. For example, a recently registered individual might well be a likely voter. Perhaps the individual has not had had the opportunity to vote in prior elections (i.e., a new citizen or a young voter), or has some reason to specifically register to vote in an upcoming election.

Campaigns often categorize voters based on their voting history. For example, we might categorize people who always vote as "Prime," people who voted in the last two elections as "Double Prime," and in the last three elections as "Triple Prime." It is up to your campaign how you want to prioritize voters. For example, if you are planning for a municipal election, you might target those who have voted in two out of the last three municipal elections, or in a primary, focus on those who previously voted in primaries.

As you look more carefully at your list of likely voters, you may find that they seem different from your district as whole, particularly in terms of demographics like age, gender, ethnicity, etc. In addition to voting history and absentee voting status or voting by mail if available, research finds that voter characteristics like education, income, and age (over 65) are consistently linked with higher rates of voting (Shaw 2014).

These demographics underscore a thought you may be having, that big groups of people are missing from your list of likely voters. What about people who are not registered to vote? What does targeting only individuals with substantial voting histories communicate about people who are registered but do not vote regularly? Might they become more regular voters if campaigns reached out to them in targeting, especially given the importance of campaign mobilization as a factor contributing to political participation (Verba et al. 1995)? These are all important questions

to ask, and consistent with values in the NASW (2017) Code of Ethics. As social workers, our values lead us to want to reach out to everyone, particularly those who have felt like they have not had a voice in the past. Electoral campaigns rarely reach out to these individuals, because their concern is securing votes for their candidate in an efficient manner. The best predictor of whether someone will vote in the future is whether they voted in the past. You will have to make hard decisions about how to spend limited resources. Nonprofit organizations are more likely to engage in the necessary work to expand the electorate.

Who Is Likely To Vote for You

Analyze demographics. Once you have identified likely voters in your district, it is time to determine which ones are likely to vote for you. Start by taking a more careful look at your list of likely voters. In general, demographics and partisan election behavior are highly correlated, so there may be some assumptions you can make based on demographics either on the individual or neighborhood level. For example, young people, those who identify as Asian, Latinx, or black, and unmarried white women tend to vote Democratic, while older Americans, white men, and married white women tend to vote Republican (Shaw 2009). Of course, demographic assumptions are not determinative. There are many older Americans who do not vote, Millennials who do, and people who identify as African-American who vote (or run for office) as Republicans. Furthermore, these general trends may be less true depending on the specific candidate or context (e.g., larger percentages of Latinos vote for Republicans in Texas than in many other states), but they can help inform your voter targeting.

Listening and observing. You may already have a sense of which groups will respond best to your candidate and the campaign message. The campaign's initial experiences in the district either in this campaign or in any prior campaigns also can provide you with important information about this. Listening tours, focus groups, and conversations with both leaders in your community and with individual voters can help a campaign understand which voters are motivated by its message. Use your core social work skills that focus on attending to what individual voters are saying, active listening, and reflecting back what you hear. Keep track of your campaign's contacts with individual voters and what they tell you about their support for the candidate. Make sure to add those records into the overall file so they can be used to refine your campaign's targeting. You might use the voter categorization system identified in Chap. 4:

1 = strongly support your candidate
2 = leaning toward your candidate
3 = undecided ("there's an election?")
4 = leaning toward your opponent
5 = strongly support your opponent

Identifying the "1s" (strong supporters) and "2s" (people leaning toward your candidate), helps your campaign have a sense of whether you have enough

supporters to win. If not, you will need to think carefully about what tactics might help expand your supporters.

Key Influencers

In addition to outreach directly to targeted voters, a field plan should incorporate attention to certain key influencers in the community who can support these outreach efforts. These key influencers can help control access to voters and the way in which voters hear your message. These key influencers may be formal leaders within political systems or informal leaders who influence systems from the outside, including policy-makers, significant interest group leaders, media influencers, members of coalitions, and those in the community with money and power. Depending on the context of the district and the candidates' connections, key influencers in a specific district might include:

- Current and former elected officials whose views align with the candidate
- Former colleagues or others who can speak to the candidates' strengths (e.g., in the sample Wellstone Action campaign plan linked to in the Resource section, the candidate who is a long-time teacher identified former students as key influencers in the community)
- Other people in the candidate's professional community (in the above example, these included teachers and parents)
- Union leaders who can help access endorsements, volunteers, and potential fundraising
- Leaders of community, business, and neighborhood associations

Your plan should include a list of specific key influencers (by name) to which your campaign will reach out, in an effort to get them on board with your campaign. Wellstone Action (link provided in the Resource section) advises compiling a list of "100 influential individuals" in the community. These should be individuals who, if specifically targeted, might be willing to endorse the candidate, donate money, write letters to the editor on the candidate's behalf, or host a house party or fundraiser to connect the campaign to their networks of voters, volunteers, and/or donors.

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Finding Key Influencers
If you were going to run for office tomorrow, who are ten key influencers in your community you would want to have on your side? These might be current or former elected officials, respected leaders of local religious groups or congregations, political party leaders or activists, well-known community leaders, etc.

Section 6: Identifying and Selecting the Tactics the Campaign Will Use (Stage 5)

Tactics in an electoral campaign center around the steps you will take to persuade your identified likely voters to vote for your candidate or issue. In general, with limited resources, you want to focus on tactics that are as **targeted** as possible—tactics that will reach the specific voters you are looking for and not cast a wide net. Many of these tactics take place as part of a campaign's **field operation**, the group of staff and volunteers who coordinate direct contact with voters.

Targeted tactics include those that involve one-on-one contact with voters: direct mail to specific homes, knocking on doors, phone calls, and emails to specific lists. Each of these one-on-one tactics may be used as part of voter registration, absentee ballot or early vote efforts, and Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts. **House parties**, small gatherings hosted by a supporter and attended by those in the supporter's personal network, are also excellent targeted tactics. They allow the campaign to reach out to a supporter's network, and the supporter is likely to invite those who are most receptive to the campaign's message. A newer form of targeted advertisement is digital advertisement, reaching people on their computer, phone, or tablet (Tamrakar 2016). Social media outreach and advertising also has the potential to be targeted, depending on how it is implemented (Meyer 2016).

Non-targeted tactics are those tactics that will reach a wider set of potential voters. These may include press releases, most television and radio advertising, and letters to the editor. We share a selection of tactics frequently used in electoral campaigns, organized by the categories introduced in Chap. 6. You will see a significant amount of overlap in the tactics used by both advocacy and electoral campaigns.

Sample electoral campaign tactics	
Collaborative tactics	• One-on-one meetings with key leaders • Ongoing relationship-building with key leaders
Public education tactics	• Paid media spots, on television, radio, social media outlets, in newspapers, or in digital advertising • Free media, e.g., public service announcements on television or radio • Media event • Educate voters via social network postings • Educate community leaders • Letters to the editor, op-eds • Work with reporters and bloggers to communicate the message • Distributing campaign literature to key leaders and voters
Grassroots tactics	• Door-to-door canvassing of voters • Rallies • Postcard campaigns to voters • House parties
Persuasive tactics	• One-on-one meetings with key leaders or voters • Send letters to key leaders or voters • Call key leaders or voters • Direct lobbying • Distribute campaign literature to key leaders or voters • Poll/communicate polling

(continued)

Sample electoral campaign tactics	
Electoral tactics	• Register new voters • Educate voters about candidate stances • Get out the vote efforts • Endorse candidates with similar values • Campaign on behalf of candidates with similar values • Fundraise on behalf of candidates with similar values, or in opposition to incumbents who do not hold similar values
Litigation tactics	• Educate key leaders and voters about voting law and procedures • Work with legal experts to defend the rights of voters who may have their rights violated
Demonstrative tactics	• Marches/rallies
Contest/ confrontational tactics	• Share opposition research with key media allies • Negative attacks on the opponent via traditional or social media

FURTHER REFLECTION: Thinking About Campaign Tactics
Review the identified list of Sample Electoral Campaign Tactics. What tactics have you seen in electoral campaigns that seem to be missing here? List as many additional tactics as you can and organize them along this continuum.

In selecting tactics for your electoral campaign, make sure that your tactics are chosen strategically, based on what is most likely to move likely voters toward your candidate. Using the categories of voters identified in Section 5, start early with your persuasion and turnout **universes** (groups of voters) to be sure they get the information needed to convince them to vote, and that they are convinced the election is important (and know it is happening). As your campaign progresses, combine those who have been persuaded from these two with your base universe who are your most reliable voters. Then focus your specific GOTV tactics on this new group when they need to vote. As you consider and implement specific tactics, continually reflect on why the specific tactics you select will help increase your votes and move you toward your win number.

APPLY YOUR SKILLS: Selecting Appropriate Campaign Tactics
Reflecting on the race you chose above, identify at least three tactics you think would be effective in your electoral campaign. Which category(ies) of voters do these tactics target? Why do you think they will be effective for this category(ies)?

Section 7: Campaign Timeline

Given the time-limited nature of an electoral campaign, a campaign timeline is an essential component of your campaign plan. The timeline should be developed at the outset of your campaign, but it is important to acknowledge that this is work in progress that changes as the campaign goes on. The overall campaign timeline should highlight the significant actions of each part of the campaign and when each will take place. It helps clarify how the different parts of the campaign can work together (for an example of this, see the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs political campaign planning manual in the Resource section). For example, the candidate cannot knock on doors until target lists are created and the campaign literature is ordered. The literature cannot be ordered until enough funds have been raised to do so. Funds cannot be raised until the candidate has officially filed paperwork saying he/she is running. Additionally, your timeline might include a list of key events and dates around which the campaign might want to arrange press events or tailor message "themes" (e.g., highlighting the candidate's educational stances during the week of local school graduations, policies related to veterans during the week of July 4).

Depending on your candidate's needs, this timeline may in fact include several different timelines, including weekly calendars for the candidate and other key individuals (the campaign manager, family members, etc.). These separate individual calendars help the campaign consider when the candidate will be able to do the most important activities of the campaign: contact with voters and raising money. This is also a good way to find out if there are going to be significant time conflicts that the campaign must plan around. For example, a candidate who works evenings in a residential program is going to be hard-pressed to be able to knock on doors or call voters during the few hours voters are reachable at home. Developing a timeline for the candidate helps key campaign staff process this challenge, so a plan can be made. It is also an opportunity to protect time for the candidate to spend with family or take a break from the campaign. This self-care time is important, and should be prioritized in the candidate's calendar.

Review of Key Terms and Concepts

Ballot initiatives (or **referendum campaigns**): those in which voters are asked to decide about anything from the school budget to a constitutional amendment—ideas are on the ballot rather than people

Base voters: voters in your district who are likely to vote and are likely to vote for you.

Candidate elections: designed to elect a person or slate of people to office. They can generally be divided into one of three categories: general elections, primary elections, and special elections.

Candidate filing: completing the necessary paperwork to declare an intent to be on the ballot.

Caucus: a primary process (see entry on "primary elections**"**) where party members gather together to select their party's candidate rather than a traditional election format.

Citizen referendum: a referendum which comes directly from the people, not the legislature. (Please refer to "referendum" for more information.)

Cleaned voter list: a list of voters in which the duplicates, mistakes, and names of voters who are deceased or have moved have been removed.

Closed primaries: states' primary elections that require voters to be registered with a specific party in order to vote in the primary. Voters cannot vote in a closed primary for which they are not registered, leaving independent or unaffiliated voters no opportunity to vote in the state's primary.

Convention: national, state, or local meetings held by political parties to officially nominate party leaders and adopt party platforms.

Direct democracy: a practice in which state law allows citizens to vote directly on issues they care about.

District: a political subdivision that is grouped together to elect a specific representative(s) to a government body.

Field operation: the group of staff and volunteers on a campaign who coordinate direct contact with voters through methods such as knocking on doors and phone calls. Field efforts might include voter registration, absentee ballot or early vote efforts, and GOTV efforts.

Field plan: plan for targeting the voters you want to reach.

General election (or **regular election**): the binding election that decides who will hold a given electoral political position, including legislative, executive, and judicial, where applicable.

House parties: small gatherings hosted by a supporter and attended by those in the supporter's personal network.

Ideology: the set of ethics, ideals, and principles that describe how we believe the world works or should work.

Incumbent: a person who is currently holding office.

Initiative: an organized process in which citizens are able to place items (statues or constitutional amendments) on the ballet without needing to go through their state's legislature.

Legislative referendum: a measure that appears on the ballot, referred by the state legislature after approval by that body, which is for direct voter decision.

Likely voters: those who are probably going to vote in the election.

Message: A short, concise statement to be used during one's campaign, aimed at a specific audience, that captures what a specific group should know about the candidate.

Midterm elections: federal general elections that are held in between presidential elections (2 years after a presidential election). They include races for Congress and one-third of the Senate but not for President.

Nominate: the act of a political party endorsing political candidates.

Nonpartisan races: those in which candidates run without any party affiliation in a general election, and generally the winner takes all. In the USA, nonpartisan elections are most common for judicial elections.

Open primaries: states' primary elections that do not require voters to declare a party on their voter registration form. This system provides maximum flexibility and privacy, but minimal ability for parties to nominate candidates that represent the party's platform.

Open seat: there is no incumbent running for office at the time of the election.

Partially closed primaries: states' primary elections that give political parties the opportunity to choose whether unaffiliated voters can vote in that party's primary, but do not allow those registered with a different party to vote. This allows more flexibility from year to year, but may lead to confusion about who can vote.

Partisan races: those in which each candidate is given or wins the nomination of a political party. This could happen as part of a primary election or caucus, or as part of a nominating process by the official members of that party. Either of these gives the candidate the right to use the label of that political party during the general elections.

Party affiliation: the party that a voter is registered with.

Persuasion voters: voters in your district who are likely to vote and but have not yet decided to vote for you.

Precinct: the division of a geographic area in which voters are provided ballots for a particular office. They also may be referred to as election districts, electoral districts, voting districts, boxes, beats, or wards.

Precinct analysis: the process of collecting publically available records in order to determine what voting trends are in a precinct and what candidates or methods have been successful in reaching voters in the past.

Primaries open to unaffiliated voters: states' primary elections where voters must choose the ballot of the party they are registered with, but if they are unaffiliated, they can choose any party's ballot. Like the partially open primaries, some states may require voters to affiliate with a party if they choose this option.

Primary elections (or **primaries**): those that allow members of a political party to decide who will represent them in a future general or regular election (although there are other ways for this process to happen). Primaries can be divided into six categories from most restrictive to least restrictive. They are one way to winnow down a large field of candidates into a smaller list, and as practiced in the USA, generally reinforce our two-party system.

Recall: the process by which a local or state official can be removed from office through a vote before his or her term has ended. The majority of states allow for the recall of local and/or state officials, although the process and grounds for said recall vary wildly.

Referendum: a measure that appears on the ballot for direct voter decision, often similar to an initiative. There are two types of referendums: legislative and citizen.

Referendum campaigns: please refer to "ballot initiative."

Regular elections: please refer to "general elections."

Representative democracy: a political system in which citizens elect individuals to govern on their own behalf.

Special elections: held when a vacancy exists in an elected position and it needs to be filled outside of the usual election timeframe.

Targeted tactics: campaign tactics that will reach the specific voters you are looking for (versus casting a wide net). Targeted tactics include those that involve one-on-one contact with voters: direct mail to specific homes, knocking on doors, phone calls, emails to specific lists, and house parties.

Third parties: smaller parties than the two major political parties (in the USA, the Republican and the Democratic parties) holding the majority of power and positions in the political realm. Examples of third parties include the Green, Libertarian, and Independent parties.

Top-two primaries: states' primary elections that represent all candidates on one ballot, and may list party affiliation or party preference next to them. The top two candidates go on to the general election, which may result in two candidates from the same party in that election.

Town meetings: public meetings held by cities or towns where decisions are made directly by the residents of the town who are present at the meetings.

Turnout voters: voters in your district who may not vote, but are likely to vote for you if they do vote.

Two-party system: as in the US government, this is a system in which the two major political parties hold the majority of the power and positions in the political realm, and few seats are held by third parties, or smaller parties, and fewer still by those who are unaffiliated.

Unaffiliated: not officially connected with any political party.

Uncontested: only one candidate from one party runs in the general election, or one member of a party "runs" in a primary election.

Universe: group of voters.

Voting history: a record of the elections in which a voter has cast a ballot.

Vulnerable incumbent: one who is facing their first reelection, won by a small margin, is touched by scandal, or has other weaknesses.

Resources

Books and book chapters

Bryan, F. M. (n.d.) *Real democracy*. Retrieved from http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/R/bo3641466.html.

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Websites

Carolina Public Press precinct trend analysis: http://carolinapublicpress.org/26190/breaking-down-mountains-precinct-level-analysis-wncs-vote/

Fresh Air interview about primaries: http://www.npr.org/2016/03/23/471563611/the-mind-boggling-story-of-our-arcane-and-convoluted-primary-politics

Grassroots Initiative
- Homepage: http://gograssroots.org/
- How to Identify and Analyze Likely Voters: http://gograssroots.org/files/analyzevoters.pdf

Houston Chronicle's precinct analysis: http://blog.chron.com/kuffsworld/2017/03/precinct-analysis-the-targets-for-2018/

Lego people explain the Iowa Democratic caucus: https://youtu.be/SJqv--jyXPg

Municipal Research and Services Center: http://mrsc.org/Home.aspx

Nate Silver discussion of likely voters in polls: https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/likely-voters-and-unlikely-scenarios/

National Conference of State Legislatures
- Elections and Campaigns: http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns.aspx
- State Primary Election Systems: http://www.ncsl.org/documents/Elections/Primary_Types_Table_2016.pdf

National Democratic Institute
- Campaign Planning Manual: https://www.ndi.org/files/Political_Campaign_Planning_Manual_Malaysia.pdf

Campaign Schools Handbook: https://www.ndi.org/files/Campaign%20Skills%20Handbook_EN.pdf

Political Parties:
- Democratic Party: https://www.democrats.org/
- Green Party: http://www.gp.org/
- Libertarian Party: https://www.lp.org/
- Reform Party: http://www.reformparty.org/
- Republican Party: https://www.gop.com/
- Working Families Party: http://workingfamilies.org/

South Dakota Initiative Referendum Task Force meetings: http://www.sd.net/blogs/archive/.

State election website examples:
- Colorado: http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/vote/VoterHome.html?menuheaders=5 or go to https://www.sos.state.co.us/ and in the menu click on "Elections" then click "Voters."
- Hawaii: http://elections.hawaii.gov/
- Idaho: http://www.sos.idaho.gov/elect/2016Calendar.html
- Tennessee: http://sos.tn.gov/products/elections/state-election-commission-meetings or go to http://sos.tn.gov/ and in the menu under "Elections" select "State Election Commission," then select "State Election Commission Meetings" on the landing page.
- Wisconsin: http://www.gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/results or go to http://elections.wi.gov/ and in the menu under "Elections" select "Election Results."

U.S. Election Assistance Commission 2014 report on election administration: https://www.eac.gov/assets/1/1/2014_EAC_EAVS_Comprehensive_Report_508_Compliant.pdf

Wellstone Action
- Main website: http://www.wellstone.org

Campaign Plan: http://www.wellstone.org/resources/sample-campaign-plan or go to http://www.wellstone.org and click on "Tools" then scroll down to click on "Sample Campaign Plan."

WIN Number Calculator: http://www.wellstone.org/resources/win-number-calculator or go to http://www.wellstone.org and click on "Tools" then scroll down to click on "WIN Number Calculator."

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